

Morning After in Lithuania: Pride Is Tempered by Doubt

By **BILL KELLER**

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VILNIUS, Lithuania, March 12 — The citizens of the newly proclaimed state of Lithuania woke up today with a case of morning-after anxiety, the pride in their announced secession from the Soviet Union tempered by doubts about how and when it might disrupt their lives.

Even as the leaders of the new non-Communist Government were planning a swift dismantling of the Soviet administrative machine, the sober populace braced for what it expected to be a period of tension and hardship that even the more optimistic expected to last a year or two.

"No one is happy today," said Algirdas Brazauskas, the Lithuanian Communist Party boss, who lost in a bid to be president of the new republic and was today already charting a comeback effort capitalizing on the popular misgivings. "Everyone thinks the way they did it was unnatural and illogical."

The politician, who flew to Moscow today, said he voted for the declaration of independence only because "I don't

want to be called a traitor," and he chortled at the Lithuanian hopes to begin negotiations this month with Moscow on the disentangling of the two states.

"I don't think Moscow will go for it," he said, adding: "De jure, Lithuania is no longer part of the Soviet Union. But de facto, it is."

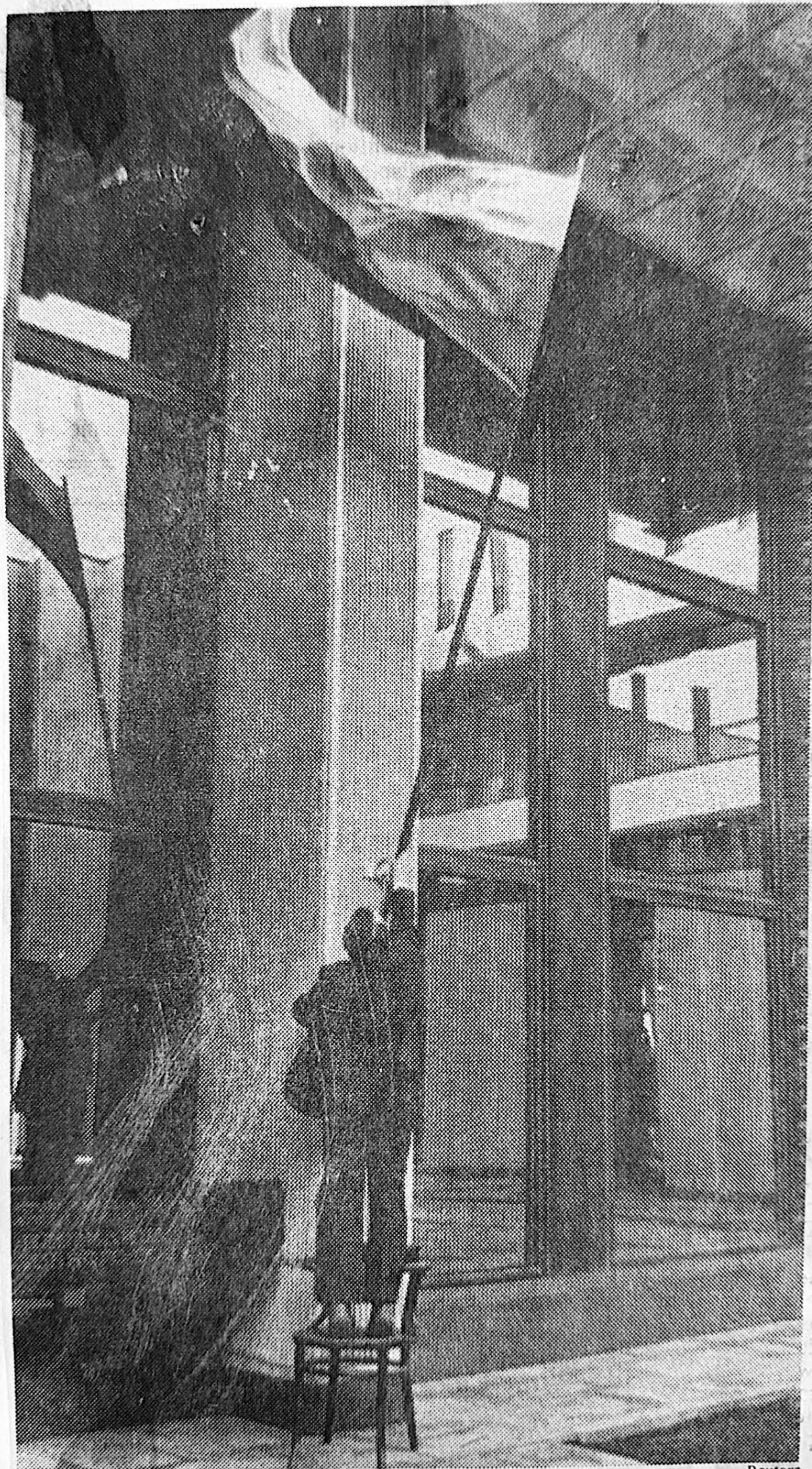
Mr. Brazauskas, clearly wounded at being the first leader of a Soviet republic ever deposed by a democratic oppo-

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Mongolian Chiefs Bow To Call for Democracy

Responding to a growing democracy movement, Mongolia's Communist leaders proposed giving up their monopoly on power and held out the prospect of free elections.

The announcement marked the unambiguous arrival in Asia of the tide of change that swept through Eastern Europe last year. The move is likely to stir apprehension in North Korea, Vietnam and especially China.



Reuters

Lithuanians are bracing for a period of tension and hardship as the new non-Communist government prepares to dismantle the Soviet administration. Outside the Supreme Soviet building in Vilnius yesterday, a worker hung the flag of independent Lithuania.

A Day Later, Lithuanian Pride Is Tempered by Doubt

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sition, may have been overstating the unease among the 3.7 million people of Lithuania.

No one interviewed here in the Lithuanian capital argued for retreating, and many voiced quiet satisfaction that the long-awaited step had been taken.

Disagreement Over President

But in the streets and factories, Lithuanians quarreled over whether the dynamic Mr. Brazauskas might have been a better choice for the forthcoming bargaining with Moscow, instead of the stooped and gentle-spoken music professor Vytautas Landsbergis, the presidential choice of the victorious Sajudis pro-independence movement.

Their feelings on this point — and on the process of withdrawal from the Soviet Union — may well be tested soon. A group supporting Mr. Brazauskas has begun gathering signatures for a referendum to replace Lithuania's strong parliament with an executive

The potential disruptions of secession are considered.

presidential system, and the party leader said he would be a candidate if the new form of government was approved.

The idea of independence had overwhelming support in Lithuania, but today some residents voiced misgivings about the timing, which may have seemed a deliberate slap at Mikhail S. Gorbachev as he prepares to assume a more powerful new presidency.

"What was the hurry?" said Zita Fedorovich, a Lithuanian assembly-line worker waiting for her pay envelope at the Vilnius furniture factory.

"We need to move fast," countered a

foreman, Regina Struzdiene. "Germany is rushing to reunify. Gorbachev is rushing to get this new presidency. If you don't rush, you lose."

Nothing was tangibly different about Lithuania today, but the new Prime Minister, a high-energy economist named Kazimiera Prunskiene, said some changes should be noticeable soon.

Changes in the Economy

Discussing plans for a dramatic leap to an independent free-market economy, she predicted the republic would move promptly to privatize farms, fisheries and small businesses, would have its own currency printed within three to six months and would open its own airline using planes now being purchased from Aeroflot.

Mrs. Prunskiene said the republic expected to take control of its borders and begin issuing its own visas within a few months. Almost immediately, she said, the new Government would abolish most of the Government ministries that now administer the economy.

Mrs. Prunskiene said the Government had begun compiling financial claims against Moscow and other demands in preparation for talks she hoped would leave Lithuania in the role of a respectful but autonomous neighbor and trading partner.

"We can be ready for these negotiations in the space of a few days," she said.

Worry About Raw Materials

The greatest commercial worry is the flow of raw materials, especially the Soviet steel, wood and oil, needed to feed the republic's industrial enterprises and prevent a serious Lithuanian recession.

Unemployment, a frightening prospect in this land of industrial paternalism, would hit hardest at the Russian and Polish minorities who are disproportionately represented in the blue-collar work force and who already grumble that they are becoming second-class citizens.

"We've had a year and a half of Sajudis, and they have brought us nothing," said Vladimir, an engineer at the 60th



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Uncertainty grew over what Moscow would do about Lithuania.

Anniversary of the October Revolution radio electronics factory, who declined to give his last name. "Now when they pass out the raw materials, you can bet we will be at the bottom of the list."

But Algirdas Siupsinskas, deputy chief engineer of the Vilnius furniture factory, said there would be willing suppliers not only abroad, but in other Soviet republics like the Ukraine and Byelorussia that are interested in increasing their economic autonomy.

"They say: 'Oh, you are Lithuanian. We are ready to help you,'" he said.

Preparing for the Transition

The factory, although dependent on the Russian republic, the largest of the Soviet republics, for 30 percent of its raw materials, said it was already at work lining up other suppliers and foreign partners for its transition to the world of competition.

"Within a month, we'll see that things are noticeably worse," predicted Anatoly Y. Vyorkin, the chief engineer at the plant. "Prices will rise, and we will have problems with raw materials. But in a year things will begin to improve."

"You are a great optimist," his deputy interrupted. "It will take at least two years to stabilize the situation."

An altogether different peril confronted the parliamentary commission handling the problems of Lithuanian soldiers, as officials today were braced for a flood of deserters from the Soviet Army.

Baltic recruits already complain of vicious hazing because of their republic's antagonism toward Soviet power, and officials here said the declaration of independence would heighten the problem.

"We are getting calls from all over the Soviet Union," said Jolanta Balciuniene, a physician and member of the commission, which has handled more than 90 deserters in the past two months. "They don't understand what their status is and they don't know what this declaration means."

Many of the 50,000 Lithuanian servicemen, she said, may interpret the republic's declaration of autonomy as an invitation to desert, and their antagonists will interpret it as a kind of treason.

"This could be quite dangerous if it happens before we work out an agreement with Moscow," she said.

In a tacit understanding with Moscow, the commission now quietly defends the soldiers from prosecution, but officials wonder how Moscow will react when the issue grows.

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The Lithuanian parliament, continuing its methodical work on the first practical steps away from the Soviet Union, today approved a law saying that no Lithuanian men would be punished for refusing to serve in the Soviet Army.

The next biennial callup of some 22,000 Lithuanian teen-agers is scheduled for May 4.